



THE HISTORY OF  
DAMON AND PYTHIAS,

OR,

True Friendship tried and rewarded.

**P**LEASURE, is, itself, an effect, and cannot be the cause, or principle, or motive to any thing; it is an agreeable sensation that arises in any animal, on its meeting or contemplating an object that is suited to its nature. As far as the nature of such an animal is evil, evil objects can alone affect it with pleasure; as far as the nature of such an

an animal is good, the objects must be good whereby its pleasures are excited.

When Damon was sentenced by Dionisius of Syracuse, to die on such a day, he prayed permission, in the interim, to retire to his own country, to set the affairs of his disconsolate family in order. This the tyrant intended most peremptorily to refuse, by granting it, as he conceived, on the impossible conditions of his procuring some one to remain, as hostage for his return, under equal forfeiture of life. Pythias heard the conditions, and did not wait for an application on the part of Damon; he instantly offered himself to duration in the place of his friend, and Damon was accordingly set at liberty.

The King and all his courtiers were astonished at this action, as they could not account for it on any allowed principles. Self-interest, in their judgment, was the sole mover of human affairs: and they looked on virtue, friendship, benevolence; love of country, and the like, as terms invented by the wise to impose upon the weak. They therefore imputed this act of Pythias to the extravagance of his folly, to the defect of head, merely, and no way to any virtue, or good quality of heart.

When the day of his destined execution drew near, the tyrant had the curiosity to visit Pythias in his dungeon. Having reproached

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